MEMORANDUM

To [redacted]
Federal Bureau of Investigation
Newark, New Jersey

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b7C

Dated: Tuesday
May 4th, 1982

By:
Edward A. Fleckenstein
39 King Avenue
Weehawken, New Jersey
07087

This concerns a subject that is not really relevant to matters we have discussed over the past year, but it has some bearing, in regard to Weehawken matters, on the subject of a memorandum which I shall be delivering to you herewith and which will be dated just subsequent to this one.

I enclose two articles from The Jersey Journal, one of November 17th, 1981 on page 2, the other from the front page of November 30th, 1981. Both articles concern Admiral Roscoe H. Hillenkoetter who since August 11th, 1957 has been living on the Palisades in Weehawken, N.J., my hometown. Since that time the Admiral and his wife who live in my vicinty have been friends of my family and me. He has been retired since 1957.

The Admiral was the first chief of the Central Intelligence Agency when it was founded around 1946. Before that he was a naval attache at the United States Embassy in Paris and later in Vichy. Coming back to the United States in mid-1941 he arrived at Pearl Harbor for active duty aboard the battleship West Virginia just ten days before the Japanese attack on December 7th, 1941. He escaped with his life by swimming ashore from the sinking West Virginia. Going back into active duty once more he later became active as commander of the battleship Missouri in the Korean War.

For Veterans Day, November 11th, 1981, ceremonies were held at the main library in Jersey City, N.J. Congressman Frank Guarini and officials of veterans groups were present and they had invited Admiral Hillenkoetter to attend. This was also motivated by the fact that a model of the battleship Missouri was on display at the library at this time. But the Admiral was not in good health and he asked me to go down there to the ceremonies on his behalf. While I was at the library in Jersey City, telephone contact was made with the Admiral's home in Weehawken, and I spoke with the Admiral and then introduced him to Congressman Guarini who then took the telephone. The first article concerns this Veterans Day.

At this time the 40th anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor was nearing. So the Congressman told me that special ceremonies were being held at Liberty Park, Jersey City, on the shore right in back of the Statue of Liberty, on Sunday morning December 6th, 1981, marking the anniversary. He and the veterans' representatives present asked me whether I could get Admiral Hillenkoetter to attend the ceremonies. I was told that the Admiral could stay in my car and view the ceremonies while seated in the car. The Admiral will be 85 years of age on May 8th, 1982.

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(Tuesday May 4th, 1981
Edward A. Fleckenstein)

I was able to get Admiral Hillenkoetter to agree to attend these ceremonies of the 40th anniversary of Pearl Harbor. He sat in the front seat next to me who was driving. In the back of my car sat Mrs. Hillenkoetter and [redacted] b6 of many years, [redacted]. b7C While at Liberty Park in Jersey City, Congressman Guarini and other officials of the city and veterans groups came over to my car and greeted the Admiral. He got out of the car to pose for a picture at one point. As said, the Admiral is not in good health, although he does go out on occasion. In this situation the weather was very cold that morning. My car was moved around so that the parade which passed the spot could be viewed and saluted by the Admiral while he was seated in the passenger front seat of my car. Later television reporters with their equipment came to the side of my car and with the window down the Admiral gave an interview, wherein I also spoke. I saw this interview on TV Channel 10 at 10 o'clock that same Sunday night.

The second article, aforementioned, of November 30th, 1981, concerns just the Admiral and his Pearl Harbor experiences and was in anticipation of that anniversary. Usually the local newspaper reporters, as in this case, call me up first and ask me to arrange an interview with the Admiral. They and the veterans groups have been calling me for several years now whenever they want to have an interview arranged or write an article on him. In Weehawken the Admiral and his wife have been staunch supporters of civic matters in which I have been involved and of my work over the years, as they from the first became members of the civic organization, "Keep Weehawken Beautiful, Inc.", of which I am president. The ship model in the later article, of November 30th, 1981, being that of the battleship Missouri, [redacted], b6 some years ago and given to the Admiral. b7C

The Jersey Journal
Jersey City, N.J.
Hudson City Edition
Page 2
Tuesday afternoon,
November 17, 1981

Holding a model of the USS Missouri that is being included in an exhibit at the Jersey City Public Library, 472 Jersey Ave., on the battleship are Rep. Frank Guarini, left, and Ben Grimm, library director.

Navy veterans recall surrender on USS Missouri

The Jersey City Public Library display recalls in words and pictures the ship, the USS Missouri, and the day, Sept. 2, 1945, it became the focus of world attention.

Stanley Stine of Jersey City was there. And he recalled the tension that preceded the Japanese surrender signing on that ship on that day.

"As the Japanese destroyer came close to the Missouri," Stine said at the opening of the library display yesterday, "10 5-inch guns of the Missouri were trained on the destroyer, in case it would be used for a last-minute suicide attack."

"How little we trusted the Japanese then," commented Rep. Frank Guarini. "How great a partnership there is today between Japan and the U.S."

Guarini was a naval officer in the Pacific, on a ship that had participated in such battles as Okinawa and the Philippines.

Prior to the surrender on the Missouri, the USS McKinley, with Guarini on board as a lieutenant junior grade, had been used for transporting preliminary surrender documents signed by local Japanese military commanders, the congressman said.

"The USS McKinley was known as Mighty Mack," Guarini said. "It was an amphibious group command ship."

Also participating in the display opening ceremony yesterday at the main library were a delegation from the Navy; Stine; Edward A. Fleckenstein of Weehawken and Lee Godlfarb.

Scheduled to participate but unable to attend because of his emphysema was Roscoe H. Hillenkoettery, 84, a retired vice admiral, who was not on the Missouri the day of the ceremony but captained the ship shortly after the war. He lives in Weehawken.

"She was a very, very fine ship," he told a reporter.

He recalled post-war voyages on the battleship to Turkey and to Italy.

Hillenkoetter in 1947 became the first director of the Central Intelligence Agency.

The recollections of the end of the war in the Pacific yesterday also sparked memories of the beginning of that war — Pearl Harbor.

Goldfarb, who grew up in Jersey City and now lives in East Hanover, will be sending a message to Guarini from the 40th anniversary observances at pearl Harbor next month. He recalled what happened after the minelayer on which he was serving as a radioman was hit by a Japanese torpedo.

"We were tied alongside the USS Helena," Goldfarb said. "When it seemed we were going to sink they cut us loose, hoping they could get us in front of their ship alongside the dock, and secure us to the dock. But it happened too quickly and the ship sank. We went up on deck and jumped to the dock."

See Page 22.

NORTH HUDSON HOBOKEN
FINAL EDITION

THE JERSEY JO

and Jersey Observ

Tonight: Cloudy, low in 30s.
Tomorrow: Rain, high in 40s.

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 30, 1981

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Attack on Pearl Harbor!

An admiral remembers today in Weehawken

Photo by Jeff Huntley

In his Weehawken home, Roscoe H. Hillenkoetter, a retired vice admiral, holds a model of the USS Missouri, one of the ships he commanded during his service in the Navy. He also served on another battleship, the USS West Virginia, that was sunk at Pearl Harbor Dec. 7, 1941.

By Robert Larkins

Forty years ago next Monday, a Marine orderly went to Commander Roscoe H. Hillenkoetter, executive officer of the battleship West Virginia, with the urgent message that the Japanese were attacking Pearl Harbor.

"I told him," recalled Hillenkoetter, now a retired vice admiral living in Weehawken, "to go back and tell the officer of the day to get the hell on the job.

"About that time we got hit with an air torpedo.

"We got hit with several of them. The whole portside was blown out."

The ship was also hit by a couple of bombs. Hillenkoetter was wounded in the foot and the ship's captain was killed.

See ADMIRAL — Page 12.

Admiral remembers attack on Pearl Harbor

THE JERSEY JOURNAL
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"I was in my battle station," Hillenkoetter said, "which was aft. He was on the bridge in his station, when a bomb dropped on it.

"I didn't know he was killed till the whole thing was over.

"We did knock down a couple of planes."

He and the surviving crew members finally had to swim to safety from the sinking ship.

Hillenkoetter was in a position following that Dec. 7 attack to realized how the nation's military prospects had been damaged.

"They looked bleak," he said. "But the one thing you could always figure was we were a helluva big nation."

The events of that day are still vivid in his memory, but Hillenkoetter, who retains an upright military bearing at the age of 84, can recall many eventful days in his long career in the Navy and as the first director of the Central Intelligence Agency.

After training in the Naval Academy from 1916 to 1919, Hillenkoetter's first assignment was as an officer on a troop transport that left Hoboken for Europe to pick up American soldiers and return them to the United States in the aftermath of World War I.

Between the world wars, Hillenkoetter served in combat operations against guerillas in Cuba and Nicaragua.

Up until a few weeks before his Pearl Harbor service, Hillenkoetter had been naval attache in France, where a Vichy government under Nazi domination had taken over following France's defeat by Germany in 1940.

One of Hillenkoetter's assignments during the war was as chief intelligence officer in the Pacific.

A big advantage in intelligence, he said, was that the Americans had broken the Japanese code. They were able to decode messages between Japanese ships, and from Japan to the Japanese ships at sea.

The Japanese would make alterations in the code on a regular basis, but soon naval cryptographers would break the code again, Hillenkoetter said.

"We were ready," he recalled. "It didn't matter what they changed."

But he was back at sea before the end of the war. And shortly after the war ended, he took command of the battleship Missouri.

"The Missouri was of course a great favorite of Mr. Truman," Hillenkoetter recalled. "He used to bring people up from Washington to visit the ship."

President Truman, by executive order, would temporarily remove the ban on alcohol on board ship during his visits.

"When I was relieved from command," Hillenkoetter said, "I had seven half-bottles of liquor to turn over to my relief."

Later, as CIA director from 1947 to 1950, Hillenkoetter would report directly to President Truman daily.

"I always considered him a very good friend," Hillenkoetter said of Truman.

Truman, Hillenkoetter said, never asked the CIA to influence events in other countries; he only wanted information on them from the agency.

Hillenkoetter, after combat duty again in the Korean War, served as a naval district commander in New York City from 1951 to 1955. It was during that period that he visited Weehawken and decided to make his retirement home in that township. He moved to Weehawken in 1957.

"It's just a nice place to live," he said. "It's convenient to New York . . . The people are wonderful."

Hillenkoetter, who suffers from emphysema, wishes he had quit smoking earlier than he did. But he has no regrets about his Navy service.

"It was enjoyable," he said. "You traveled around the world. If the good Lord let me, I'd do it all over again. . . . You had your ups and downs and good and bad, but it was always interesting."